

## Amendments to the Claims

1-13. (Cancelled)

14. (Currently Amended) An antisense 14-3-3 $\sigma$  construct comprising:

- a. a transcriptional promoter;
- b. a transcriptional terminator;
- c. a DNA segment comprising one or more segments of the 14-3-3 $\sigma$  gene

according to SEQ ID NO: 1, said gene segment located between said promoter and said terminator, said DNA segment being inverted with respect to said promoter and said terminator, whereby RNA produced by transcription of the DNA segment is complementary to a corresponding segment of 14-3-3 $\sigma$  RNA produced by human cells.

15. (Original) The antisense 14-3-3 $\sigma$  construct of claim 14 wherein said transcriptional promoter is inducible.

16. (Currently Amended) A 14-3-3 $\sigma$  antisense oligonucleotide comprising: at least ten nucleotides complementary to 14-3-3 $\sigma$  mRNA, wherein said mRNA has a nucleotide sequence according to SEQ ID NO: 1.

17. (Currently Amended) The 14-3-3 $\sigma$  antisense oligonucleotide of claim 16 which comprises at least about twenty nucleotides complementary to 14-3-3 $\sigma$  mRNA, wherein said mRNA has a nucleotide sequence according to SEQ ID NO: 1.

18. (Original) The 14-3-3 $\sigma$  antisense oligonucleotide of claim 16 which contains one or more modified nucleotide analogs.

19. (Original) The 14-3-3 $\sigma$  antisense oligonucleotide of claim 16 which is a circular molecule.

20. (Currently Amended) A method for promoting the proliferation of cells in culture, comprising the step of:

administering a 14-3-3 $\sigma$  antisense oligonucleotide comprising at least ten nucleotides complementary to 14-3-3 $\sigma$  mRNA to said cells in culture to inhibit the expression of 14-3-3 $\sigma$ , wherein said mRNA has a nucleotide sequence according to SEQ ID NO: 1.

21. (Currently Amended) A method for promoting the proliferation of cells in culture, comprising the step of:

administering a 14-3-3 $\sigma$  triplex-forming oligonucleotide comprising at least ten nucleotides complementary to 14-3-3 $\sigma$  gene according to SEQ ID NO: 1 to said cells in culture to inhibit the expression of a 14-3-3 $\sigma$  gene.

22. (Currently Amended) A method for promoting growth of cells in culture, comprising the step of:

administering to said cells in culture to inhibit the expression of 14-3-3 $\sigma$ , an antisense 14-3-3 $\sigma$  construct comprising:

a. a transcriptional promoter;

b. a transcriptional terminator;

c. a DNA segment comprising one or more segments of the 14-3-3 $\sigma$  gene according to SEQ ID NO: 1, said gene segment located between said promoter and said terminator, said DNA segment being inverted with respect to said promoter and said terminator, whereby RNA produced by transcription of the DNA segment is complementary to a corresponding segment of 14-3-3 $\sigma$  RNA produced by human cells.

23. (Original) The method of claim 22 wherein said transcriptional promoter is inducible.

24-83.(Cancelled)